

Columbia Basin Collaborative
Integration/Recommendations Group (I/RG) Meeting
January 26th, 2023, 1:00pm –4:00pm PT/ 2:00pm –5:00pm MT
Zoom Webinar

Welcome, Opening Remarks, and Proposed Agenda

Liz Mack, Kearns & West, opened the meeting and invited Jake Brown, Coeur D'Alene Tribe, to provide the opening prayer. Guy Norman, State of Washington, provided opening remarks. In light of Guy's retirement, Liz thanked Guy for his service to the I/RG and salmon recovery throughout the basin. Liz reviewed the agenda and asked members to share any updates that were pertinent to the Columbia Basin Collaborative in the chat. Group members shared the following updates:

- The Pacific Fisheries Management Council begins the 2023 meeting cycle March 5 in Seattle. Topics include ocean salmon fishing seasons for California, Oregon, and Washington area, and pre-season run forecasts will be formally presented. National Marine Fisheries Service (NFMS) will present its “guidance letter” outlining the ESA conservation limits on listed salmon runs.

Preview Process for Consensus

Liz asked members to share any updates that were pertinent to the Columbia Basin Collaborative in the chat. Group members shared the following updates:

- The Pacific Fisheries Management Council begins the 2023 meeting cycle March 5 in Seattle. Topics include ocean salmon fishing seasons for California, Oregon, and Washington area, and pre-season run forecasts will be formally presented. National Marine Fisheries Service (NFMS) will present its “guidance letter” outlining the ESA conservation limits on listed salmon runs.

Liz then reviewed the process for building consensus. She stated that every Topic Specific Work Group (TSWG) will also be using a consensus process. Liz shared that the CBC Charter states, “Consensus is reached when it becomes evident through deliberation that every Member, at the very least, does not oppose a decision.” She reminded work group members that both the TWSGs and the I/RG are consensus groups. For the I/RG, members are meant to come to consensus on recommendations that they can live with moving forward to implementers and decision makers. For the TWSGs, members are meant to come to consensus on passing the recommendations to the I/RG.

Liz then showcased the CBC Process Diagram. She went over how the recommendation process will happen from this point onward, reminding members that the topic-specific work groups are meant to develop recommendations which will then go to the I/RG for deliberation. She reminded the group that a lot of the groups are still developing items, and some are getting very close to having formal recommendation. Once those are shared with the I/RG, the deliberations process begins. Liz emphasized that consensus is only reached if all I/RG members do not oppose a

decision. If consensus cannot be reached on a specific recommendation, it will not become a recommendation for the CBC and the discussion will be documented and made publicly available. However, individual members still have autonomy and can advance things externally outside of the CBC.

The group offered the following input:

- Question: If consensus isn't reached, will the biological matrices and heatmap still be included in our documentation? Answer: Those items would be documented in the materials coming out of a work group. It is unlikely a summary we would include all the data, but they are documented in the recommended action form.
- Question: How is the Science Integration Work Group (SIWG) integrating into the other work groups? Answer: The SIWG has come up with its own cross-cutting recommendations and will be looking at the recommendations from other groups in their next meeting. The SIWG is seen as a value-added step to the process and not as a clearing house that a recommendation must pass through before reaching the I/RG.
- Question: Are we looking at full consensus on these recommendations or is it simply a majority? Answer: It is full consensus. Everyone should be able to live with a recommendation moving on to implementation.

Updates on the Work Groups

Liz started the work group updates by reminding I/RG members that the work groups have not yet fully developed consensus recommendations. For this meeting, the work groups have shared draft recommendation concepts. Liz as well as Amira Streeter, Kearns & West, and Samantha Meysohn, Kearns & West, then presented the draft recommendations from the Science Integration, Habitat, Hydropower/Blocked Areas, Hatcheries/Harvest, and Predation work groups.

Liz asked the group for feedback. The group offered the following input:

- One member expressed uncertainty about how the habitat working group parses out background projects. They also asked whether the Hatcheries/Harvest Work Group was looking at ocean science and management as well as river and in-stream management. They noted it is helpful to review environmental changes in the ocean when assessing mitigation options to support fisheries.
- Some members suggested that hatchery performance should be included in these recommendations.
- I/RG members suggested that ocean data should be included in reviews for Hatchery/Harvest. One member mentioned a recommendation related to pre-season forecast and ocean management and suggested that the group consider gearing up for the next negotiations for the Pacific Salmon Treaty and making recommendations to US representatives.
- One group member reminded the I/RG members that salmon are on a path to extinction and the status quo means salmon are still going to go extinct. They suggested that the I/RG review the Washington Academy of Sciences report on ecological gains.

- Several group members expressed concerns about the disconnect between the goals set by the Columbia Basin Partnership Task Force (CBPTF) and the level at which the recommendations are being made. One member stated that they feel that the work groups' recommendations could be more closely aligned with the stock-specific quantitative goals that the CBPTF established and that the CBC should make recommendations more stock and geographic specific and use data from the CBPTF as well. Another member stated that the group needs to ensure that the scale of the recommendations is appropriate. They mentioned that the group should ensure that any recommended action is comprehensive, produces and sustains harvestable salmon, and respects treaty rights.
- Group members also expressed a desire to develop stock specific goals with geographic specificity. Many factors impact the lower Columbia, upper Columbia, the Snake River, and other regions differently.
- Other group members agreed that scale and scope should be expanded moving forward and more specifics should be added.
- Several members noted they were pleased with the level of the first round of recommendations and reminded everyone that this is an iterative process that is still in an early phase. Many agreed that getting more granular with recommendations would happen in future rounds. One group member stated that they would like to be as explicit as possible with recommendations as soon as possible.
- Several group members pointed out that the Columbia Basin Partnership Phase II Report has a lot of information as to how these conversations are supposed to be framed and encouraged everyone to familiarize themselves with the document.

Social, Cultural, Economic, Ecological Work Group and Public Forum Proposal

Liz introduced Kevin Scribner, Conservation Stakeholder Seat who had asked the share two draft proposals with the I/RG. Kevin noted that this presentation does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Project Team or the other stakeholder representatives. Kevin provided a presentation on two proposals: to convene a forum for Social, Cultural, Economic, and Ecological (SCEE) group to evaluate the proposed actions through the lens of SCEE and to convene a public engagement forum, as well. He recommended the group establish the forums now so that they can be there ready to evaluate recommendations once they come out of the I/RG.

The group offered the following input:

- Question: How long would the review process for the SCEE group be? Answer: There would be a nine-month review process once recommendations are made by the work groups. This step would function as an additive analysis similar to the SIWG.
- One work group member noted that there has not been a formal presence of social science experts in past efforts to change the management of fisheries based on data which has led to misunderstandings and distrust between fishing communities and fishery scientists. They said they believe that sociologists are essential in helping people understand the changes taking place in the basin and that the recommendations consider social, economic, and policy contexts properly. They noted that last year in Washington, a well-supported habitat bill was ultimately not passed due to social factors and lack of outreach to communities. This situation could happen to the CBC under similar circumstances.

- One member stated they would like to have social science professionals on the SCEE working group.
- Multiple members stated that they supported the concepts presented in the proposals and discussed how to best implement them. One member stated that they thought SCEE discussion was imperative but that those discussions should happen with the I/RG and not in a working group of the CBC.
- One work group member said they believe that SCEE topics are interwoven into the work groups and expressed an interest in not adding an additional layer of process. They stated they think it is important to have these goals explicitly referenced and that the work groups can use the SCEE lens to evaluate actions.
- Work group members discussed the outreach/public forum component mentioned in the presentation. A work group member raised concern about what information would be shared through the outreach of the CBC noting a lack of agreement on the science related to the salmon survival models. Other members stated that these models have been peer reviewed and are the best science available.
- One member noted that it would be beneficial if there were background materials that could be distributed to people outside of the CBC process to explain the salmon recovery actions and their impacts. Members also discussed the need to communicate agreed upon scientific materials and discussed the potential process for agreeing upon such materials.

Liz invited those interested in the topic to reach out to the facilitation team or Kevin who will be revising the proposals based on the feedback shared today. She also stated that all the presentation slides will be circulated to the group.

Moving Forward, Confirm Upcoming Topics, Next Steps, and Summary

Liz reviewed the list of future topics that I/RG members had requested at previous meetings which included: a presentation from CSS and NOAA and an ocean conditions update. The group also suggested Upper Columbia Summer and Spring Chinook 2023 runs and future conditions as a limiting factor as additional topics for the group to consider.

Liz then reviewed the next steps and thanked the group for their participation:

- KW: Share feedback from the I/RG on the recommendation concepts
- Work Groups: Continue to develop recommendations
- KW: Develop a meeting summary and circulate
- KW: Reach out to schedule the next I/RG meeting
- I/RG reps: Reach out to KW/Kevin to team on next steps for the SCEE and Public Forum proposals

Tim Dykstra, US Army Corp of Engineers, gave closing remarks.

Meeting adjourned at 4:00pm PT.